

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

This material contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Laws, Title 18, U.S.C. Secs. 793 and 794, the transmission or revelation of which in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

S-E-C-R-E-T

COUNTRY	Bulgaria	REPORT		25X1
SUBJECT	1. The Mixed Engineers Battalion 2. The Artillery Group 3. School for Engineer Students 4. Morale and Conditions of Officers and Men	DATE DISTR.	7 September 1955	25X1
DATE OF INFO.		NO. OF PAGES	8	
PLACE ACQUIRED		REQUIREMENT		25X1 25X1
DATE ACQUIRED		REFERENCES		

This is UNEVALUATED Information

SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE

The Mixed Engineers Battalion

25X1

2. The Mixed Engineers Battalion had about 200 men and was composed of three companies. Each company, which had three platoons, had 65 to 70 men; each platoon, which had three squads, had 22 or 23 men; and each squad had seven or eight men.
3. The Battalion Commander was Captain Velchev (fnu), According to the T/O, the battalion commander should have been a Major. Other command officers (all Lieutenants or Senior Lieutenants) were as follows:
 - a. A deputy commander;
 - b. An adjutant;
 - c. A political officer; and
 - d. An administration officer.

25X1

S-E-C-R-E-T

25X1

STATE	X	ARMY	Ev	X	NAVY	X	AIR	X	FBI	AEC	DISA/TIT	X
-------	---	------	----	---	------	---	-----	---	-----	-----	----------	---

(Note: Washington distribution indicated by "X"; Field distribution by "#")

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

S-E-C-R-E-T

25X1

- 2 -

25X1

Company commanders were Senior Lieutenants or Lieutenants, and platoon commanders were Lieutenants or Junior Lieutenants. Each company included 12 noncommissioned officers, three of which were deputy commanders of platoons and nine were squad commanders. Enlisted personnel of the command included five or six men with duties as clerks, telephone operators, couriers, etc.

4. Officers were armed with pistols, while noncommissioned officers had automatic rifles of the "Shpagin" type with vertical magazine with 32 shells or "Sudayev" PPSH with round magazine for 72 shells. Troops had Soviet 7.6-mm. 6-round carbines. The troops should have been armed with automatic rifles (like the noncommissioned officers), instead of carbines. The issue of automatic rifles was scheduled. Each platoon had one "Degtyarev" submachine gun of Soviet manufacture with round magazines.
5. Each company was equipped with the following material, used exclusively for training:
 - a. Four or five pontoon boats of Soviet manufacture with dimensions which varied from two to four meters in length and one or two meters in width.
 - b. Parts for wooden bridges, in limited quantities, in poor condition, for the most part war surplus material;
 - c. Approximately 20 wooden anti-tank mines of German and Soviet manufacture;
 - d. Equipment and tools used in the maintenance and repair of roads, among which were three stone crushers, levels, stadia rods, surveyors' stakes, etc.; and
 - e. One truck and five or six draft horses.
6. The following was the daily schedule followed by the battalion during the summer (in winter, reveille was 30 minutes later and the afternoon rest period lasted one hour only):

5:00 a.m.	Reveille
5:20 - 5:25 a.m.	Gymnastics
5:30 - 6:15 a.m.	Toilette and cleaning of barracks; Inspection of arms and clothing
6:15 - 6:45 a.m.	Political education
6:45 - 7:15 a.m.	Breakfast
7:30 - 12:00 noon	Main instruction period
12:15 p.m.	Lunch
12:45 - 2:45 p.m.	Afternoon rest period
3:00 - 5:00 p.m.	Miscellaneous instruction
5:00 - 7:00 p.m.	Free period
7:00 - 8:00 p.m.	Dinner
8:00 - 9:00 p.m.	Recreational activities
9:00 - 10:00 p.m.	Free hour
10:30 p.m.	Lights out
7. The first two months of military training were devoted to formal instruction, close order drill, regulations, knowledge of all weapons of the unit, offensive and defensive weapon fighting, etc. Actual training started in the first ten days of the third month of service and was carried out daily in the morning from 7:30 to noon. The afternoon hours (3:00 to 5:00 p.m.) continued to be devoted to formal education, close order drill, regulations, etc. Tactical training of the individual included field exercises, hiding and camouflage, preparation of individual defenses, use of gas mask, etc. Tactical training included use of the squad in combat (attack and defense).

S-E-C-R-E-T

25X1

Training was developed progressively until the whole battalion took part in it as a unit.

8. Firing instruction started at the same time as tactical training and continued until the end of the time in service, with an average of three periods per month. Troops were trained in the use of all the weapons of the unit. The number of training periods was not fixed and continued until such time as the individual became a master of his weapon. Firing practice started at a distance of 100 meters against a fixed target and gradually reached 400 meters against a moving target.
9. Training in specialties included the construction of bridges on boats, acquaintance with and use of antitank mines; acquaintance and use of anti-personnel mines; construction and repairs of roads. This portion of the training was given contemporaneously with tactical training (normally on alternate days) and the whole was integrated by firing lessons given from time to time.
10. The battalion went on two or three marches per year, each covering at least 80 kilometers to be covered in two days, always marching at night. Once the unit reached its destination, it camped for four or five days and carried out tactical exercises there.
11. Every day from 6:15 to 6:45 a.m. political instruction was given to the companies. All officers also attended the instruction and were in turn responsible for carrying out a program which consisted in keeping the troops up to date on the world political situation, explaining the reasons for which certain political measures were taken by Bulgaria, and carrying out propaganda work aimed at convincing the men to collaborate with the Party in spreading Marxist theory.
12. The men were given one hour per day (from 8:00 to 9:00 p.m.) for recreational activities. Recitals, choruses, variety shows, chess tournaments, etc. were organized informally.
13. Troops were issued the following articles of clothing:
 - a. One overcoat;
 - b. One heavy cloth uniform;
 - c. One pair of heavy shoes;
 - d. One pair of high, lightweight shoes;
 - e. One pair of leggings;
 - f. Three shirts;
 - g. Three pair of shorts;
 - h. Three undershirts; and
 - i. Three pair of socks.

In the summer the men were issued a linen uniform for going on pass and various used linen clothes for use as fatigues. Clothing to be washed or repaired was turned in to the company commands, who sent it on to an unidentified unit. Exchanges were carried out by the company commands. Articles of clothing and equipment were replaced frequently and whenever needed.

14. The meals of the troops consisted of the following:
 - a. Breakfast: tea or coffee substitute, cheese, jam, bread;
 - b. Noon meal: soup (generally consisting of vegetable soup or broth), meat or sausage with vegetables (greens, potatoes, etc.), cooked fruit, compote, or yoghurt; and
 - c. Evening meal: Same as for noon meal, without soup.

The daily ration of bread was 800 grams. Food was cooked by civilians and was ample and good. Other civilian personnel handled the washing of dishes.

S-E-C-R-E-T

25X1

15. Passes were issued between Saturday afternoon and Sunday evening. Company personnel was divided into three shifts so that no more than one third of the company was on pass at any one time. The three shifts were as follows:
- a. Saturday, between 3:00 and 9:00 p.m.;
 - b. Sunday, between 8:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.; and
 - c. Sunday, between 3:00 and 9:00 p.m.

Evening passes were only granted on Saturdays and Sundays until 11:00 p.m. to those who earned them. Leaves were granted only after one year of military service. Only in emergency cases were leaves granted during the first year of service. The length of leave varied between 10 and 15 days depending on the amount of good will shown and the progress made by the soldier in his training. Troops were paid two leva per month (sic).

The Artillery Group in Mikhaylovgrad

16. The Artillery Group in Mikhaylovgrad had approximately 180 men, was commanded by an unidentified captain, and included five or six junior officers.
17. Ten percent of the men were equipped with PPSH automatic rifles and 90 percent were equipped with ordinary-type rifles. The unit was equipped with seven or eight Soviet 50-60 mm. rubber-tired guns with twin tails and shields. They were drawn by small German Steyer trucks with twin axles and rubber tires.
18. The group frequently carried out firing exercises in the vicinity of the barracks area. In the fall of 1953, the unit celebrated the excellent results they achieved in a firing contest among all the artillery units of the Bulgarian Army.

School for Engineer Students

19. The "Vulko Chervenkov Voenno Inzhenerno Uchilishte" (Military Engineering School) is a school for regular Army and reserve engineer student officers. It is located between the northern suburbs of Svishtov and the Danube. All the military units of Svishtov are located in this area, which is approximately 2,000 x 700 meters in size and is surrounded by a fence. The school is composed of nine or ten buildings grouped together and somewhat isolated from the other military buildings, which constitute the "Barracks Quarter." The school buildings are of one, two or three stories, are partially of pre-World War II construction, but for the majority were built in 1947-1949. These are modern buildings which are well equipped with classrooms, conference rooms, movie theatres, and modern health installations.
20. The school is directly subordinate to the Ministry of People's Defense and is commanded by an unidentified Regular Army Engineers Lieutenant Colonel.
21. At this school, courses are given for regular Army student officers, which last two or three years, and for reserve student officers, which last three months. Candidates for admission to the two or three year courses must present their application, which is carefully studied particularly with an eye toward the political standing of the applicant. Approximately 150 students were taking the courses. The course for reserve student officers was commanded by regular Army engineers Major Malkov (fnu). In the summer of 1954, Major Malkov was removed as director of the course because of immoral conduct. The instructors consisted of ten to twelve company and field grade officers. The highest ranking officer was a Lieutenant Colonel (name unknown) who taught political culture. Senior Lieutenant Valkov (fnu) taught road construction techniques. The students at this course were approximately 100 in number, all graduates of engineering, architecture, economic sciences, etc., faculties, who were grouped in a company of three platoons. The course lasted from the middle of December 1953 to the middle of March 1954.

S-E-C-R-E-T

25X1

S-E-C-R-E-T

25X1

22. The main courses given at this school were as follows:

- a. Construction of mobile bridges (on boats, barges, etc);
- b. Construction and maintenance of roads;
- c. Composition and use of various types of explosives;
- d. Acquaintance with and use of various types of mines (antitank, anti-personnel, etc.) used by various armies;
 - (1) The German TM42 (Tankovi Minn 42) antitank mines; and
 - (2) The Soviet PMDB antitank mines;
- e. Weapons and firing;
- f. Acquaintance with and use of weapons:
 - (1) TT Soviet pistols;
 - (2) Soviet carbines, of an unidentified model;
 - (3) PPSH and PPS Soviet automatic rifles; and
 - (4) Soviet "Degtyarev" submachine guns.
- g. Topography, map reading, sketches, reliefs, etc.;
- h. Fortifications: fixed works and field works; trenches, road blocks; camouflage, etc.;
- i. Combat training;
- j. Political culture: The program provided for a cycle of conferences on the reasons for the adoption of political measures decided on by the government; the structure of the governments of the Western Bloc countries; living conditions in those countries in relation to the internal political situation; political and commercial relations between western and eastern countries; etc. In all of the conferences, whatever the subject discussed, the speaker always managed to show the superiority in all fields of the Peoples' Democracies over the capitalist countries. At the conclusion of the conferences, the students could ask for clarifications or express their own point of view, but in order to avoid trouble, they nearly always declared themselves in agreement with the speaker.

23. Classes comprised seven hours of the day, and there was an obligatory two hour study period. The program was theoretical for the most part. Practical training and exercises took no more than four to five hours per week.

the course was a stiff one and required continued and intense application on the part of the student, with no free time. At the conclusion of the course, exams were given before a special commission, which was rather severe and was composed of officers not of the school, but who were assisted by the regular teachers. Those students who at the conclusion of the course passed the exams, were given temporary leave, while those who failed were sent as privates to engineer units to complete a further period of service of unknown length. Two months after the end of the course, these individuals who completed it successfully received an appointment as reserve Junior Lieutenants. After a few more months, they were called up to a first period of service lasting one or two months and then, every year, they were recalled for 30 to 60 days.

24. Food at the school was ample and well prepared. Soups, meats, and vegetables, as well as deserts, were served nearly every day. Pay amounted to 16 leva per month.

S-E-C-R-E-T

25X1

S-E-C-R-E-T

25X1

Morale and Condition of Officers and Men

25. With the doors open to rapid careers with a certain amount of prestige, the Bulgarian military cadres enjoy privileges of various kinds which maintain their morale high. [redacted] the officers, for the most part of modest origin, were very much attached to the service and they carried out their duties without complaining, probably for the following two reasons:
- a. Because they had succeeded in reaching positions which they never had hoped to achieve; and
 - b. Because, in the position attained (comparing it with all other social categories), they are the best off.
26. Discipline is undoubtedly severe in the Bulgarian service, [redacted] the Bulgarians are by nature prone to obedience and thus do not resent discipline. Their wages, compared to those set for various professional categories, such as physicians, engineers, and lawyers (which do not generally exceed 1,000 leva per month) may be considered excellent. For example, a Junior Lieutenant who is a bachelor receives approximately 750 leva per month. A Captain receives 1,500 leva, depending on the size of his family, position held, and time in service. Furthermore, all regular Army officers and noncommissioned officers receive semi-gratuitous housing, family allotments, certificates for the purchase of clothing, etc. These prerogatives, which are unknown to other social categories, make their economic life easy and justify the existence of a high morale among them.
27. [redacted] the loyalty of these men toward the regime because the officers and noncommissioned officers cadres are constituted of politically selected individuals.
28. Among troops also there is no discontent; discipline, as stated above, is severe but tolerable. There are no complaints, or at least there are only those common to troops of all armies (not enough passes, delays in granting leaves, etc.). The food is good and ample. The treatment by officers of troops is based on maximum respect of the individual. The system, still current until a few years ago, of obtaining respect by means of violence, has been abolished, and no one dares to raise a hand against a soldier because such an action would be severely dealt with. Resorting to punishment is also rare. The units have gained cohesion from the manner by which officers and noncommissioned officers treat the men, and also the relations between the cadres and the troops are far better than those existing in the years immediately following World War II. [redacted] the Bulgarian Armed Forces formed a pillar on which the nation could rest with confidence.
29. The following legend refers to a sketch of the barracks area of the Mixed Engineers Battalion and the Artillery Group near Mikhaylovgrad, which is included on the following page:
- 1 - A 3-story building, 50 x 10 meters in size, divided into two units as follows:
 - a. First unit consisting of a ground floor with kitchens and store-rooms: first floor, artillery group command and quarters for the troops; second floor, troop quarters; and
 - b. Second unit, as in (a) above, for the use of the Mixed Engineers Battalion.
 - 2 - Garage and parking area for cannons, a 1-story brick building, 30 x 12 meters in size, where autovehicles of both units and cannons of the

S-E-C-R-E-T

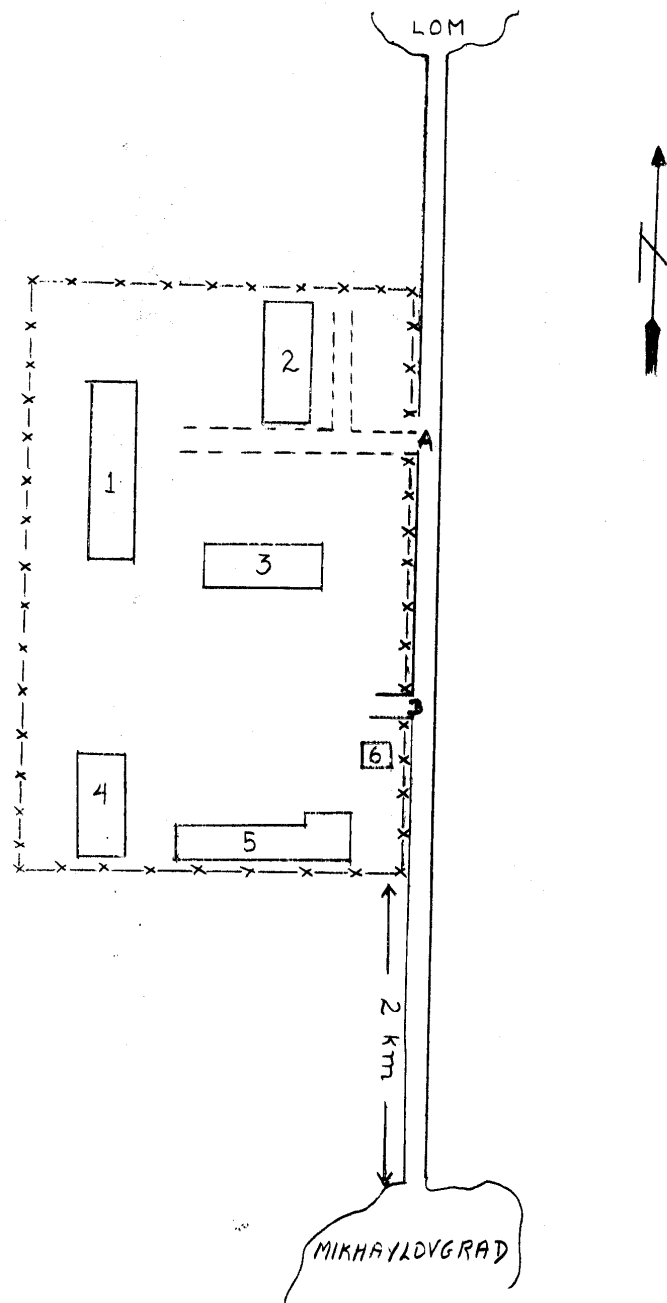
25X1

S-E-C-R-E-T

25X1

artillery group were parked.

- 3 - Stable, a 1-story brick building, 30 x 12 meters in size;
- 4 - A 2-story brick building 25 x 10 meters in size; ground floor, oven and flour storeroom; first floor, assembly rooms (separated) for the two military units;
- 5 - Workshops for carpenters, machine shop, weapons repair shop, located in a 1-story building 50 x 10 meters in size; these workshops were only used by the Engineers Battalion; and
- 6 - Guardhouse, a brick building, 6 x 4 meters in size.



S-E-C-R-E-T

25X1

S-E-C-R-E-T

25X1

25X1

Comment: [redacted] a regulation was issued in September 1953 reducing time in service for university graduates to 18 months. About mid-December 1954 all graduates serving in Army units were sent to special schools to attend courses for appointment as reserve Junior Lieutenants. [redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1

S-E-C-R-E-T

25X1